

<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/675,284	PATTERSON ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Louis K. Huynh	3721	

-- **The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to the RCE filed 12/05/2005.
2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-26.
3.  The drawings filed on \_\_\_\_\_ are accepted by the Examiner.
4.  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a)  All    b)  Some\*    c)  None    of the:
    1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_ .
    3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

5.  A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6.  CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
    - 1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - (b)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_ .

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7.  DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

#### Attachment(s)

1.  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2.  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3.  Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date 12/05/05
4.  Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material
5.  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6.  Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_ .
7.  Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8.  Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9.  Other \_\_\_\_\_.

**Detailed Action**

***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission of IDS filed concurrently with the RCE on 12/05/2005 has been entered and considered.

**REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record fails to disclose and/or teach:

- An appliance for evacuating a flexible container, as recited in claim 1, that includes in combination: a recess defined in a base housing and in communication with a vacuum source, a removable drip pan resting in the recess, and at least one door hingeably mounted to the base housing and closable over the drip pan, and wherein the drip pan is made of a heat resistant material;
- A method for evacuating a flexible container, as recited in claim 10, that includes the steps of: isolating an open end of a flexible container having an amount of liquid from ambient air in a vacuum sealing appliance, vacuuming and drawing a portion of the liquid into a removable drip pan, sealing the container, removing the container, and removing the drip pan from the vacuum sealing appliance, and

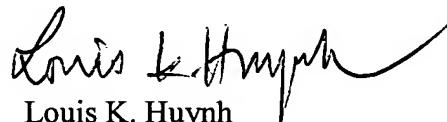
wherein the drip pan is made of a heat resistant material;

- An apparatus for evacuating and sealing a plastic bag, as recited in claim 15, that includes in combination: a base housing with a vacuum source mounted therein, a removable drip pan resting in the base and in communication with the vacuum source via a nozzle extending partially over the drip pan, a pair of doors hingeably mounted to the base housing and surrounding the nozzle; and a heating element mounted on one of the doors for heating a bag positioned around the nozzle, and wherein the drip pan is dishwasher-safe;
- A removable drip pan for a vacuum-sealing appliance containing a vacuum inlet mounted in a base, as recited in claim 21, that includes in combination: an upper vacuum port upstanding from a bottom of a recess defined within the pan, and a lower connection in communication with the vacuum port and defined on the bottom of the drip pan, and wherein the drip pan is made of a heat resistant material.

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Louis K. Huynh whose telephone number is 571-272-4462. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 9:30AM to 5:00PM.

5. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I. Rada can be reached on 571-272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.
6. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Louis K. Huynh  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3721

January 06, 2006